Be Realists

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PANDIT JAWAHARLAL'S SIXTIETH

The reader will get this issue almost on the eve of Pandit Jawaharlal's birthday. He completes sixty years on the 14th. His popularity and his achievements need no narration in words.

If we leave aside exceptional personalities like Gandhiji, Jawaharlal, Subhasbabu and similar others who showed exceptional powers of leadership from an early age, the completion of the fiftieth or sixtieth year should not normally be regarded as an occasion for public celebration. But it has become so in our country of short-lived people. If the general expectation of life were above eighty, the fiftieth and sixtieth birthdays would not be regarded as of greater importance than the thirtieth or fortieth even in case of a public worker, and would at most be celebrated privately in the circle of family and personal friends. For a person perfectly healthy in body and mind, sixty years should really be the commencement of the period when his fully developed intellectual and organizational capacities begin to bring forth their best fruits. Indeed, in the opinion of George Bernard Shaw, a person is not fit for doing real serious acts of life before sixty. When Gandhiji's seventieth birthday was celebrated on a great scale, he is reported to have expressed surprise that seventieth birthday was regarded as a fit occasion for public celebration ! Gandhiji was just growing, in Shaw's opinion.

But among our people with short lives, the decade after fifty is regarded as entry into the "forest" of life and few people are expected to cross it over safely and successfully. So, if a man can show some public work to his credit before fifty, he and his friends get impatient to commemorate his fiftieth birthday as a golden day. And perchance, he attains sixty, not much hope is entertained about his being able to reach seventy, and so the sixtieth birthday becomes a "diamond" day ! Moreover the general experience is that even if persons live longer, most people lose their mental faculties after sixty. Far from giving their best after that age, they show complete intellectual breakdown. There is a saying which means "sixty means senility".

Indeed, these are indications of the poverty and physical and mental breakdown of our people as a nation. Since not many hope to continue their development after sixty, a few who do so become objects of public congratulations. If we were perfectly healthy, the sixtieth year would have the same importance in our mental perfection, as the twentieth in our physical one. It must mark the beginning of one's best intellectual output. That age should not be an occasion for public celebration.

Of course, as I have said above, there would be still some exceptions like Pandit Jawaharlal. But even in his case I hope and pray that his achievements in the years to come might prove so much more precious as to make all his previous achievements look like small models. And may he live so full hundred years for serving humanity.

Wardha, 31-10-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES

The Working Committee's ruling that R.S.S. members can join the Congress organization may be quite in order constitutionally. It appears from press reports that the ruling was given on a reference by the Bihar P. C. C. I do not know what led that body to make the reference. Shri Golwalkar, according to press report again, denies having approached the Congress with any such proposal. So, in the absence of any explanation, it would appear as if a section in the Congress itself has desired that members of the R.S.S. should join the Congress organization.

It is a strange turn of events, though not surprising. The public held and still hold the R.S.S. as a body whose ideology is the same as that of the Hindu Mahasabha. The essential features of that ideology, as understood by the public and to put them in the fairest manner, are

> (a) strong assertion of Hindu orthodoxy,
> (b) the establishment of a State in which the traditional Hindu outlook of life should predominate as of right,
> (c) non-acceptance (not to say rejection) of the doctrine of non-violence as preached by Gandhiji, and
> (d) dislike (not to say hatred) for Islam.

So far as I am aware, the R. S. S. has not said that this public belief about its objects is incorrect. It can be said to the credit of Shri Golwalkar and the R. S. S. that on ideological essentials they have always maintained a consistent position, and whatever other secret methods the R. S. S. men might have been suspected of employing or of having liberty to employ, they have not concealed or changed their beliefs. On all these four points, Gandhiji and all those who

accepted his lead, whether political, or cultural and social, held, if not quite opposite, at least very modified and heterodox views. Gandhiji was a reformer Hindu, if not much more than that. For this, he was always denounced by *Sanatani* Hindus. He could never think in terms of Hindu *Raj* and he regarded truth and non-violence as a creed and essence of Hinduism. And, with regard to his attitude towards other religions, if he could have harboured just a little less fellow-feeling for a follower of at least Islam, if not of other religions also, he need not have met a violent death. But he stood for a different ideology and it was generally assumed that even if there were individual Congressmen who did not share his views, the Congress as an organization stood by him in this ideology. Gandhiji at least believed so until perhaps a few months before his death.

And so Gandhiji died for his incapacity of regarding other religions as less worthy of reverence than Hinduism and that in India at least it should have the place of honour. At the time the Government itself suspected that the R. S. S. had a hand in Hindu-Muslim killings and in the assassination of Gandhiji, and had violent designs against the State itself. That was the reason for banning that body and detaining its leaders and workers in prison for a year or more. The suspicion was fully supported by public opinion, and indeed, wild public demonstrations against the R. S. S. members in several parts of the country preceded Government action itself, at the time of Gandhiji's martyrdom.

After a year or so, the ban was lifted and the Chief and other detenus were released. The Chief, the only authorized spokesman of the R .S .S., declared that he and his organization stood for the same ideals, aims and objects as before the ban, the only points conceded by him being the framing of a constitution in a form which the Government could not regard as objectionable, and respecting the country's flag along with its own.

Indefinite detention of persons without any offence proved against them is never desirable, whatever be the government which does it. And so, release of the detenus was just and proper, if the Government could not prosecute them for any definite offence. Though released, the Prime Minister only a few days ago did not seem to be unsuspicious about that body and said that the Government would watch them. The public, of course, is, frankly, very suspicious about them and makes no distinction between them and the Hindu Mahasabha. If public opinion is based on groundless prejudice, it is for the R. S. S. to remove that prejudice by suitable declarations and acts. These are not forthcoming.

Under these circumstances the Working Committee's resolution assumes great significance. It means that either the Congress has no particular cultural ideology of its own and is indifferent about what ideology its members accept and work for ; or that so far as cultural ideology is concerned, it accepts that of the R. S. S.

If it is the former, I apprehend that the Congress might find itself faced with further dissensions in it, leading to further schisms or group formations. For, in the stage through which India is passing at present, every cultural ideology carries with it a definite political, social and economic outlook and programme, as also methods of work.

I said that the turn of events was strange but not surprising. According to my own feelings the reason is that even before the *Quit India* Movement, if not earlier, the Congress began its swerve towards the Hindu Mahasabha ideology, and has been definitely going towards it ever since.

It is hinted that the R. S. S. is an active, militarist, disciplined army of young men with a fervour and burning pride for Hinduism ; that it is capable of giving a fight to the Communists (and Socialists ?) ; and that the acquisition of its co-operation will strengthen the Congress and be helpful to the Government. It is also no longer concealed — if ever it was — that in the opinion of several Congressmen, the non-violent philosophy of Gandhiji is not a practical proposition. It is not a mere question of having up-to-date armed forces for defending the country against outside attack. But even the maintenance of law and order and suppresion of riots of civilians is not possible without resorting to firing and similar measures along with its Public Safety Laws. So those Congress or constructive workers, who have, under the influence of Gandhian teaching, lost the capacity of giving hard blows on an occasion cannot be very helpful to those who want to run a government. The R. S. S. is believed to be better trained for the practical man's philosophy.

On the economic and social side also the R. S. S. is not known to have any theories inconsistent with industrialization, centralization, and the present order built upon class, caste and sex distinctions with their various gradations and types of work, emoluments, rank, prestige, etc. Some of the provincial Governments have, partly under Gandhian influence and partly under the influence of Western ideas, gone very fast in matters of social reform, such as prohibition, temple entry, Harijan equality, monogamy, divorce, etc. These reforms have become embarrassing enough. Their implementation is actively opposed by the public. Several Congressmen, without seeming to be opposed to these reforms, would wish that not much zeal should be shown to act up to them. The R. S. S. people with neither pro-Gandhian nor reformist bias about them, would be able to express these views more unreservedly than old Congressmen can, and might help the latter to come out of the dilemmas created by

Gandhiji's ideas, which, will all their deference to him, their reason discards as impractical. So, if the Congress can catch the young and energetic R. S. S. men, it will have verily "caught the Tartar"! And then I do not see if there will remain any reason for the Hindu Mahasabha also to remain outside the Congress, — except for purposes of power-politics.

The consequences that might follow their entry into the Congress are that those who are unable to give up Gandhian views might find it impossible to stick to the Congress. The same might happen with those Congressmen, who lean towards Marxism, but are not Socialists; the disputes between the Congress and the Socialists will be much more acute and pronounced than they are now; so also the rivalry between "Brahmans" (i.e. middle or clerical and trading classes by heredity) and the "non-Brahmans" or "*Bahujans*" (i.e. new educated middle class that has arisen from other classes) might become keener; also between the suppressor and the suppressed classes.

The one good thing, to my mind, will be that those who have always declared themselves as adherents of non-violence and Gandhism and the constructive programme will have their faith put to the test. They have fondly looked to the Congress to help them and have spent too much time in criticizing the Government and the Congress. They will know now that they must rely upon their own faith and God and on their capacity to work for the good of the people

Wardha, 16-10-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

P. S. As will be seen this was written about three weeks ago. It was, however, held back for further study of the question and watching developments. I see that the immediate reactions of several Provincial Congress Committees are not favourable to the R. S. S. This shows that the apprehensions referred to above are widely held.

Some of the Congress spokesmen have compared the R. S. S. with the Jamiat-ul-Ulema and some other organizations, limited to members of one particular religion. I believe that there is a difference between the R. S. S. and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, if not others. The R. S. S. is a volunteer organization like that of the Congress itself. It may not have any formal connections with the Hindu Mahasabha, but both are based on the same ideology. The pledge of a Congress volunteer is, if I am not misinformed, to serve all people without distinction of class, creed, race, etc. In the event of a disturbance or calamity, a Congress volunteer, like a policeman or a soldier, must not see whether the rioter or the victim is a Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Sikh. Nor would he encourage proselytization movements of any religion. A Muslim League or an R. S. S. volunteer in similar circumstances will help only his co-religionist, and might help both the rioter as well as the victim of his own community. He is interested in getting more people to his fold. I do not know what is the attitude of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema people on this. If a member of the R. S. S. joins the Congress, as a volunteer he will be a member of an organization with a different ideology and pledge from that of the Congress. If he joins also the Congress Seva Dal, I wonder if it will not involve him in pledging loyalty to two different bodies at the same time.

If the Jamiat-ul-Ulema or any other sectarian or religious bodies also have their independent volunteer organizations based on different principles from that of the Congress, in my opinion, they too would be misfits in the Congress.

Moreover, the R. S. S. is not merely a Hindu cultural body. So far as I am aware it holds that India is and must be the homeland of the followers of a religion which originated in India; the followers of religions of foreign origin can stay in this country subject to certain conditions only. This is not, I believe, the stand of the other sectarian bodies who are allowed to join the Congress.

If these assumptions are wrong, the R. S. S should correct them in a clear manner for the benefit of all concerned. Even if it is not interested in joining the Congress, removal of misunderstandings by itself will be a service in the present atmosphere. The Jamiat-ul-Ulema and other bodies would also do well to make their position clear on the various matters raised in this article, so far as they apply to them.

4-11-'49 K. G. M.

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HARIJAN

November 13 1949

BE REALISTS

[Replying to the innumerable messages of good wishes on his seventy-fourth birthday Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel issued the following statement on 1-11-1949. — *Ed.*]

Messages of good wishes and sentiments of love and affection which kind friends from far and near have sent me on my birthday have moved me beyond words. The year that has gone had many anxious moments for me personally, as well as for my countrymen. Throughout, I was sustained by the deep attachment, loyalty and devotion which my countrymen have always extended to me. For all this and for the goodwill and consideration which I have received from one and all of them I am deeply grateful.

It is a source of great personal regret to me that my health does not now permit me to maintain those personal contacts which used to be such an important part of my being. It is now only given to me to continue these as far as possible by correspondence within the limits which work and health permit me. I hope, therefore, that kind friends will not take it amiss if I am unable to reply to their communications of greetings and good wishes personally. I should only like to say that all these have touched me deeply and my only prayer is that I may deserve such an abundance of love, loyalty, trust and confidence.

In my speech at Delhi yesterday, I emphasized the need for united effort, restraint and a sympathetic understanding of our problems and difficulties. I repeat those words today, and I should like once more to appeal to my countrymen to realize the true critical nature and extent of the times through which we are passing. Let history apportion the blame where it lies.

Let us postpone mutual bickerings and fault-finding until we can afford that pastime. Today, these will not avail us. They will only prevent us from action, positive and constructive, which is the need of the hour.

Whether in political or in economic matters, let us face the issues as realists, as men of responsibility and of practical outlook. If we do so, we shall soon learn to distinguish between what is helpful and what is unhelpful for our immediate purpose.

I have no doubt that if we conduct ourselves as practical men, as those interested in, and concerned almost solely with the problems of every day life, as those to whom what matters is practical results, rather than theoretical debates, we shall see through our problems and difficulties much quicker and much more effectively than if we engaged ourselves in perpetual wrangles about rights and wrongs of one principle or another or of different 'isms'.

This is the only message that I should like to give to my countrymen today and I hope each one of them will be able to appreciate the bearing of this message on the concrete problems of the moment which affect us all directly and intimately.

As for myself, the art is long and time is fleeting. The time when I shall have to render accounts to the Maker is, at my age, not very distant. Kind and generous Providence gave me an opportunity during the last three years to serve my countrymen in the field of practical politics. I have done so to the best of my ability and the usual generosity of contemporaries has tried to snatch the verdict of history.

Should I be so fortunate as to get that verdict in my favour, it would only be the reflected glory of the love and devotion and the trust and confidence which I have been able to command from all those, with whom it has been such a pleasure and privilege to work. May God grant that, within such time as is still decreed for me, I continue to have at my disposal all this fund of affection, goodwill and support, and what is more that I may succeed in deserving it all.

NON-VIOLENT STRENGTH AND CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Let me therefore reiterate what I have said so often. The best preparation for, and even the expression of, non-violence lies in the determined pursuit of the constructive programme. Any one who believes that without the backing of the constructive programme he will show non-violent strength when the testing time comes will fall miserably. It will, like the attempt of a starving unarmed man to match his physical strength against a fully fed and panoplied soldier, be foredoomed to failure. He who has no belief in the constructive programme, has, in my opinion, no concrete feeling for the starved millions. He who is devoid of that feeling cannot fight non-violently. In actual practice the expansion of my non-violence has kept exact pace with that of my identification with starved humanity. I am still far from the non-violence of my conception, for am I not still far away from the identification of my conception with dumb humanity?

M. K. GANDHI

(*Harijan*, 12-4-'42, *Non-violent Resistance*)

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PEACE THROUGH MORAL FORCE

The following is the full text, as reported by P. T. I.-Reuters, of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech at the time of accepting the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws conferred upon him by the Columbia (U. S. A.) University on 17th October last.

After the preliminary formalities were over, Provost Albert Jacobs read the following citation:

"Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, foremost disciple of the great apostle of Indian freedom, indomitable leader of his people along the thorny path of liberation, wise counsellor and moulder of policies of a re-born nation, renowned interpreter of the aspirations of a great race, his intellectual leadership has combined a profound knowledge of the West with the great heritage and enduring traditions of the East; a champion of under-privileged peoples, his devotion to the noble ideals of universal peace and understanding have won for him the respect and acclaim of all mankind."

General Eisenhower, presenting the scroll to Pandit Nehru said:

"I gladly admit you to the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* in this University and confer upon you all the rights and privileges which attach thereto."

Pandit Nehru's Speech

Mr. President, I am deeply grateful to this great University and to you, Sir, for the honour you have done me in inviting me today and in conferring the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. It is an honour to be associated with this University and with the many men of learning and seekers after truth of this University, and I shall treasure it. To have that signal honour conferred upon me by one who has played such a distinguished part both in war and peace adds to its value.

Need for Clear Objectives

I have come to you not so much in my capacity of Prime Minister of a great country or as a politician, but rather as an humble seeker after truth and as one who has continuously struggled to find a way, not always with success, to fit action to the objectives and ideals that I have held. That process is always difficult, but becomes increasingly so in this world of conflict and passion today. Politicians have to deal with day-to-day problems and they seek immediate remedies. Philosophers think of ultimate objectives and are apt to lose touch with the day-to-day world and its problems. Neither approach appears to be adequate by itself. It is possible to combine these two approaches and function after the manner of Plato.

You, Sir, have had the experience of the role of a great man of action and also of that of a philosopher as the head of this University, and should be able to help us to answer this question. In this world of incessant and feverish activity, men have little time to think and much less to consider aims and objectives, yet, how are we to act even in the present unless we know which way we are going and what our objectives are?

It is only in the peaceful atmosphere of a University that these problems can be adequately considered. It is only when the young men and women, who are in the University today and on whom the burden of life's problems will fall tomorrow, learn to have clear objectives and standards of values, that there is any hope for the next generation. The past generation produced some great men, but as a generation it led the world repeatedly to disaster. Two World Wars are the price that has been paid for the lack of wisdom on man's part in this generation. It is a terrible price, and the tragedy of it is that even after that price was paid, we have not purchased real peace nor a cessation of conflict, and an even deeper tragedy is that mankind does not profit by its experience and continues the same way which led previously to disaster.

We have had wars and we have had a victory: yet what is victory and how do we measure it? A war is fought usually to gain certain objectives. The defeat of the enemy is not by itself an objective but rather the removal of an obstruction towards the attainment of the objectives. If those objectives are not attained, then that victory over the enemy brings only negative relief and indeed is no real victory. We have seen, however, that the aim in wars is almost entirely to defeat the enemy and that the other and real objectives are often forgotten. The result has been that the victory attained by defeating the enemy has only been a very partial one and has not solved the real problem, or if it has solved the immediate problem, it has at the same time given rise to many others, sometimes worse problems. Therefore, it becomes necessary to have the real objectives clear in our minds at all times whether in war or in peace, and always to aim at achieving those objectives.

Relationship Between Ends and Means

I think also that there is always a close and intimate relationship between the end we aim at and the means adopted to attain it. Even if the end is right, if the means are wrong, that will vitiate the end or divert it into a wrong direction. Means and ends are thus intimately and inextricably connected and cannot be separated. That indeed has been the lesson of old taught us by many great men in the past but unfortunately it is seldom remembered.

I am venturing to place some of these ideas before you not because they are novel but because they have impressed themselves upon me in the course of my life which has been spent in alternating periods of incessant activity and conflict and enforced leisure. The great leader of my country, Mahatma Gandhi, under whose inspiration and sheltering care I grew up, always laid stress on moral values and warned us never to subordinate means to ends. We are not

worthy of him and yet to the best of our ability we try to follow his teachings. Even to the limited extent to which we could follow his teachings, it yielded rich results.

Lesson of India's Peaceful Revolution

After a generation of intense struggle with a great and powerful nation, we achieved success and perhaps the most significant part of that achievement, for which credit is due to both parties, was the manner of it. History hardly affords any parallel to the solution of such a conflict in a peaceful way followed by friendly and co-operative relations. It is astonishing how rapidly the bitterness and ill-will between two nations have faded away giving place to co-operation, and we in India have decided of our own free will to continue this co-operation as an independent nation.

I would not presume to offer advice to other and more experienced nations in any way. But may I suggest for your consideration that there is some lesson in India's peaceful revolution which might be applied to the larger problems before the world today? That revolution demonstrated to us that physical force need not necessarily be the aim of man's destiny and that the method of waging a struggle and the way of its termination are of paramount importance. Past history shows us the important part that physical force has played. But, it also shows us that no such force can ultimately ignore the moral forces of the world and if it attempted to do so, it does so at its peril. Today this problem faces us in all its intensity because the weapons that physical force has at its disposal are terrible to contemplate. Must the twentieth century differ from primitive barbarism only in the destructive weapons that man's ingenuity has invented for man's destruction? I do believe, in accordance with my Master's teachings, that there is another way to meet this situation and solve the problem that faces us. I realize that a statesman or a man who has to deal with public affairs cannot ignore realities and cannot act in terms of abstract truth. His activity is always limited. Nevertheless basic truth remains the truth and is always to be kept in view and, as far as possible, it should influence our actions. Otherwise, we get caught up in a vicious circle of evil when one evil action leads to another.

India's Foreign Policy

India is a very old country with a great past. But, it is a new country also with new urges and desires. Since August 15, 1947, she has been in a position to pursue her own foreign policy. She was limited by the realities of a situation which she could not ignore or overcome. But even so, she could not forget the lesson of her great leader. In the family of nations, she was a newcomer and could not influence them greatly to begin with. But she had a certain advantage. She had great potential resources with which to increase her power and influence. The greater advantage lay in the fact that she was not fettered by past ties, by historical claims or traditional rivalries. Even against her former rulers, there was no bitterness left. Thus, India came into the family of nations with no prejudices or enmities, ready to welcome and be welcomed. Inevitably she had to consider her foreign policy in terms of enlightened self-interest, but at the same time she brought to it a touch of her idealism.

Thus, she has tried to combine idealism with national interest. The main objectives of that policy are: the pursuit of peace, not through alignment with any major Power or group of Powers, but through an independent approach to each controversial or disputed issue; the liberation of subject peoples; the maintenance of freedom both national and individual; the elimination of racial discrimination; and the elimination of want, disease and ignorance which afflict the greater part of the world's population.

I am asked frequently why India does not align herself with a particular nation or group of nations, and am told that because we have refrained from doing so, we are sitting on the fence.

The question and the comment are easily understandable because in times of crisis, it is not unnatural for those who are involved in it deeply, to regard calm objectivity in others as irrational, short-sighted, negative, unreal or even unmanly. But I should like to make it clear that the policy India has sought to pursue is not a negative and neutral policy. It is a positive and vital policy. Peace is not only an absolute necessity for us in India in order to progress and develop, but it is also of paramount importance to the world. How can that peace be preserved? Not by bending to aggression; not by compromising with evil or injustice; but also not by talking of and preparing for war.

Evils of Fear Complex

Aggression has to be met, for it endangers peace. At the same time, the lesson of the last war has to be remembered. Marshalling the world into two hostile camps precipitates the conflict which it seeks to avoid. It produces also a terrible fear. That fear darkens men's minds and leads them into wrong courses. There is perhaps nothing so bad and so dangerous in life as fear. As a great President of the United States said, "There is nothing really to fear except fear itself."

Our problem, therefore, becomes one of lessening and ultimately putting an end to this fear. That will not happen if all the world takes sides and talks of war. War becomes almost certain then. We are a member of the family of nations and we have no wish to shirk any of the obligations and burdens of that membership.

We have accepted fully the obligations of membership of the United Nations and intend

to abide by them. We wish to make our full contribution to the common store and to render our full measure of service. But that can only be done effectively in our own way and of our choice.

We believe passionately in the democratic method and we seek to enlarge the bounds of democracy both on the political and economic planes for no democracy can exist long in the midst of want and poverty and inequality. Our immediate needs are for economic betterment and raising the standards of our people. The more we succeed in this, the more we can save the world.

We are fully aware of our weakness and failings and claim no superior virtue, but we do not wish to forfeit the advantage that our present detachment gives us and we believe that the maintenance of that detachment is not only in our interest but also in the interest of world peace and freedom. That detachment is neither isolationism nor indifference, nor neutrality when peace or freedom is threatened. When men's liberty or peace is in danger we cannot and shall not be neutral; neutrality then will be a betrayal of what we have fought for and stand for.

Underlying Causes of War

Foreign domination: If we seek to ensure peace, we must attack the root causes of war and not merely the symptoms. What are the underlying causes of war in the modern world? One of the basic causes is the domination of or the attempt to dominate one country by another. Large parts of Asia were ruled till recently by foreign and chiefly European Powers. We ourselves were part of the British Empire as were also Pakistan, Ceylon, and Burma. France, Holland, Portugal still have territories over which they rule.

But, the rising tide of nationalism and the love of independence have submerged most of the Western Empires in Asia. In Indonesia, I hope that there will soon be an independent sovereign State. We hope also that French Indo-China will achieve freedom and peace before long under a Government of its own choice. Much of Africa, however, is subject to foreign powers, some of whom still attempt to enlarge their dominions. It is clear that all remaining vestiges of Imperialism and Colonialism will have to disappear.

Racialism: Secondly, there is the problem of racial relations. The progress of some races in knowledge or in invention and their success in war and conquest, have tempted them to believe that they are racially superior and have led them to treat other nations with contempt. Recent example of this was the horrible attempt, so largely successful, to exterminate the Jews. In Asia and Africa, racial superiority has been most widely and most insolently exhibited.

It is forgotten that nearly all the great religions of mankind arose in the East and that wonderful civilizations grew up there when Europe and America were still unknown to history. The West has too often despised the Asian and the African and still, in many places, denies them not only equality of rights but even common humanity and kindness. This is one of the great danger points in our modern world; and now that Asia and Africa are shaking off their torpor and arousing themselves, out of this evil, may come a conflagration of which no man can see the range or consequences. One of your greatest men said that this country cannot exist half slave and half free. The world cannot long maintain peace if half of it is enslaved and despised. The problem is not always simple nor can it be solved by a resolution or a decree, and unless there is a firm and sincere determination to solve it, there will be no peace.

Misery and Want: The third reason for war and revolution is the misery and want of millions of persons in many countries and in particular in Asia and Africa. In the West, though the war has brought misery and many difficulties, the common man generally lives in some measure of comfort — he has food, clothes, shelter to some extent. The basic problem of the East, therefore, is to obtain these necessaries of life. If they are lacking, then there is the apathy of despair or the destructive rage of the revolutionary.

Political subjection, racial inequality, economic inequality and misery — these are the evils which we have to remove if we would ensure peace. If we can offer no remedy, then other cries and slogans make an appeal to the minds of the people.

Role of Asian Countries

Many of the countries of Asia have entered the family of nations; others, we hope, will soon find a place in this circle. We have the same hope for the countries of Africa. This process should proceed rapidly, and America and Europe should use their great influence and power to facilitate it. We see before us vast changes taking place, not only in the political and economic spheres, but even more so in the minds of men. Asia is becoming dynamic again and is passionately eager to progress and raise economic standards of her vast masses. This awakening of a giant continent is of the greatest importance to the future of mankind and requires imaginative statesmanship of a high order. The problems of this awakening will not be solved by looking at it with fear or in a spirit of isolationism by any of us. It requires a friendly and understanding approach, clear objectives, and a common effort to realize them. The colossal expenditure of energy and resources on armaments — that is an outstanding feature of many national budgets today — does not solve the problem of world peace. Perhaps, even a fraction of that outlay in other ways and for other purposes will provide a more enduring basis for peace and happiness.

That is India's view, offered in all friendliness to all thinking men and women, to all persons of goodwill, in the name of our common humanity. That view is not based on wishful thinking but on a deep consideration of the problems that afflict us all, and on its merits I venture to place it before you.

"PRODUCE MORE, SPEND LESS AND WASTE NOTHING"

['Produce more, spend less and waste nothing' is the gist of the advice given by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to the nation in his speech at the reception held in his honour by the citizens of Delhi on the occasion of his seventy-fourth birthday on 31-10-1949. The speech is reproduced here. — *Ed.*]

The love and affection with which you have welcomed me have overwhelmed me, and the kind words full of feeling and emotion in which my colleagues have expressed themselves have placed a heavy obstacle in the way of my speech. I do not know what to say. My brother Rajenbabu has said that I am a man of few words. There is a principle underlying it. As the saying goes, silence is the ornament of fools. Speech is for the learned. After all, when one speaks, one must act on it. If we cannot do so, it only brings harm to the man who speaks as well as to others. I, therefore, open my lips only when the time comes, and when there is an occasion for it. If, however, there is no occasion, I just cannot bring myself to say anything.

The prayers which you have uttered and the blessings which you have showered on me encourage me to live longer and serve the country. The year which has just now closed was a critical one. It was physically critical for me, but I do not care for it. After all, the body is made of dust, and it will return to dust. When the time comes, no remedies will avail me, but what I was more worried about were the troubles which beset our country. Day and night, I thought of them and was deeply concerned about them. But the next year is going to be even more critical. To find your way out, you will have to walk on your hands and feet. You will have to tread warily, as though you are walking over the edge of a sword. One false step, and you will get involved in disaster. After all, little remains for me. Seventy-four years is a long period and a ripe old age for a man in India. When your feelings and sentiments are so strong and your wishes so insistent, I feel encouraged to live, but I shall pray that I prove worthy of your love, trust and confidence.

My only task is to strengthen the hands of our leader who is now carrying the country's burden in foreign lands. I shall do so as long as there is breath in me and I have the energy. He is enhancing our prestige in foreign countries with all his might. Our prestige is high because of Gandhiji's life and martyrdom. The way he lived extorted the admiration of the whole world, but the way he died awakened the world to his real worth and merit.

Now, our leader is working day and night to maintain our honour and our good name abroad. But in the last analysis, our honour and prestige can be maintained only if our own house is in order. If we have no honour or prestige in our own country, how can we secure it outside? We have many amongst us who do not spare us in criticism or in calumny. Some of them say that under British rule we were better off! It is our misfortune that we have amongst us such persons. If such feelings rule our hearts and minds, it only means that slavery was better.

We have got to remember that under the crushing burden of slavery of centuries, we hardly had any breathing space. By our independence, we have, as it were, infused new life into a dead body. We have yet to learn to walk, and if we start running, a fall is inevitable. Do not think that we are unmindful of the country's ills. If we were, we would have been men of straw as Churchill once called us, but now Churchill has been disillusioned. We should not forget that the whole world is full of sorrows and troubles. We ourselves do not enjoy economic freedom. It is, therefore, not in our hands alone to get out of the economic morass in which we are bogged. To get out of our troubles is, therefore, no joke. Devaluation itself has brought us face to face with untold difficulties. How can a poor labourer or a villager appreciate those difficulties? But people are misleading them and laying all the sins at our doors. There is, however, no cause for nervousness or trepidation.

We have only to approach our problems in the right spirit and with a proper frame of mind. Then, some say that we have got a Parliament and have won independence, but there is no Opposition. What is our Parliament of today? It is merely a child, and we do not want merely to imitate foreign countries. We must have institutions which are suited to our own times, our own difficulties. Gandhiji has written a lot about Parliaments, but I am not going to weary you with all that. My only appeal to you is that until India is strong enough and until vigorous and healthy blood begins to flow in her veins, we should not put up barricades against each other. Similarly, for our economic independence, we shall have to make different types of sacrifices and put in constructive work of a different sort.

In that task, we shall require the help of the cultivator who toils in his fields, of the labourer who works in his factory, of the rich who have wealth and can create more, and of the middle classes who, I know, have had to bear a heavy burden. All these are in troubles; the *kisan* has his own problem, so has the labourer, and so has the middle class. The rich men may not be having such troubles, or you may say they have more, but they also have their problems. There are very few rich men in our country. It will not pay us to ill-treat them. If, by ill-treating them, we could achieve our object, I would have joined with all those who are after them. We have to realize that we have

dearth of experienced men, and talents. We cannot be mere theorists. We have to be practical realists. Those who say that they can achieve our salvation in a different way have merely been saying it, but have not been doing anything. If we could lift the burden by merely tormenting the rich, we would not have lost any time. The fact of the matter is, however, that we have to utilize everybody's services in the common cause.

We have to take everybody with us. Every one will have to suffer. Look at the refugees. Do they have any less trouble than the *kisan* or the *mazdoor*? They have lost everything, but they have not lost faith and courage. If they do not lose these, everything is all right; but if they do, they will have lost everything.

I am very sorry that I do not have the energy left in me now to meet everybody and go about the country. Some are annoyed that I am not accessible to them. There was a time when I saw a hunderd men early in the morning during my walks, but now my energy is limited and so is my time. Nobody should take it ill, if I cannot satisfy everybody's demands. I am not one of those who live in *purdah*. Whatever limited energy I have is at your disposal. Whatever I do, wherever I am, you can rest assured that I am labouring only for you all and for the cause of the country.

My only appeal to you is that whatever little I say you should try to understand and act upon. I tell you quite plainly that if we do not make sacrifices and go forward together, we shall not be able to rehabilitate ourselves. If we could manage by punishing a few, we would do so, but we all have to secure the good of all. For that, all have to strive. You cannot work with other people's brains. It will not, therefore, do to discard talents if their services are available. You have also to remember that if we had not achieved what we did, we would not have been honoured like this in foreign countries. If we have a pit in our abdomen, it is no use our putting on good clothes and dressing ourselves well because that would serve no purpose.

The plain fact is that if we wish to survive, we have to produce more and remember, when you think of how to produce more, that "drop by drop the whole ocean is filled." Our production has stopped. We do not create any more wealth. Under British rule we used to do so and we tolerated their taking away the lion's share. Now we grumble when our own men are managing our affairs. The rich, whether they are good or bad, we have to take with us. If you can do without them, you are quite at liberty to do what you like, but so long as we need their services, we have to make it worth their while to render those services. We have to make every one understand his duty, and we have to manage everybody the way I did the Princes. Sometimes we have to punish people but that can be only when wrongs are proved. My way is different. We have to melt their hearts through love. If we can create wealth in this manner, we can secure our economic freedom.

Take for instance, sugar. There is a scarcity of sugar. Every one of us feels the pinch but if there is scarcity, let people think where we can get it from. Some say we can import. They do not know that we cannot import it. It takes time and it needs money. If we are in want of sugar, it is clear that we cannot die We may get angry about it but then we can live. If, therefore, we can manage for some time with less, because we have to, I see no reason why we should grumble.

It is possible we have made mistakes but I would say that if anybody could do better, he could come and try; I shall congratulate him. If not, let us sit together, let us think over our problems and meet them in a co-operative spirit.

You have to remember that we had had to give up areas which yielded grain. We can produce more grain in this country but that requires effort and ceaseless effort. Instead, we have people who would not produce more. We have also people who have hoarded two years' supply in anticipation of famine and rising prices. This is a disservice to the country. Our motto should be, "Produce more, spend less and waste nothing". So long as our neighbour starves, it is our duty to part at least with the surplus. Until this feeling develops amongst us and this sentiment rules us, we cannot be really strong.

The principle which I have laid before you is the one taught to us by our ancient culture and civilization. If in this country we cannot be guided by that principle, no other country can practise it. If at this time everybody demands his share, — the rich, the labourer, the *kisan* — we shall all be economically dependent and we shall never attain economic freedom. At the same time we have got to attain it. For that we have to work and we shall have to do so during the next year.

Look at the problem in another way. Our frontiers have to be guarded. Under a united India we had set apart 110 crores as the maximum expenditure on our Defence Forces. After partition two-thirds of our revenues goes for the defence of our country. We have 3 to 4 *lakhs* of men under arms. Pakistan has 2½ lakhs. In order to attain prosperity and enjoy it, it is essential that we maintain peace and guard our frontiers. Fortunately, the country is not threatened by any internal disorders. But, as I have already said, there is a pit in our abdomen. That pit has to be filled. There is fire inside; that has to be extinguished. How can we then concentrate on achieving our economic freedom?

The defence programme has to be supplemented by great industrial effort. We wish to import our equipment. We have to pay now 144 rupees where we paid only 100. This is not of

our seeking or of our doing. It has been forced upon us by circumstances. To get out of this we have to tighten our belts and make sacrifices. I myself wish to speak to everybody to go about the country and persuade men to see reason and to offer their co-operation. I want to ask them: "What would it avail if the country goes to ruin? You will never be able to make use of what you are trying to hoard." I would tell labour: "For a few days be content with what you get even if you get less than what you feel you deserve. Just produce more and create more weatlh." To Government servants I shall say: "If you cannot accept less, save more and give it to the Government. Assist us in creating more wealth in the country."

If every one of us gives even a little, India's economic independence can be secured in a not very distant future. I shall also take from the rich whatever I can by appealing to them and by persuading them. We cannot force out of them what we want. It will not pay us to wait until somebody else has done his duty. Instead, there should be a regular competition in making sacrifices. If we act according to this spirit, we shall succeed.

We have a great asset in that no dangers threaten us from inside. If we have to face any dangers from outside, the world itself would collapse. Big Powers will destroy each other if they again resort to any large-scale conflict. And if any small Power attacks us we can deal with it quite effectively. We shall not be guilty of any aggression but we have to strengthen ourselves against such dangers as might threaten us.

If you can bless me and listen to my words, there is something to live for. Otherwise I would prefer to go while I still command your affection and your goodwill. You will subsequently say: "Here was a man who was blunt and used to say bitter things, but at least all that he said was sense and was in our interest."

MEENAS — AN OFFICIAL EXPLANATION

I have received the following from the Government of Rajasthan with a covering letter that the article of Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru on *Meenas of Jaipur* published in the *Harijan* of October 23 had appeared in the form of a letter in *The Hindustan Times* of September 9, and the following reply from the Rajasthan Publicity Officer had also been published in the same paper shortly afterwards. I regret that I published the article in the *Harijan* without being aware of its previous publication and reply. It is but fair that I should publish the explanation also:

> Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru's letter regarding Meenas of Jaipur, published in your issue (*The Hindustan Times*) of Friday, September 9, is, I am afraid, based on a report which is a travesty of facts and grossly misrepresents the actual position. I shall, therefore, be thankful if you kindly bring the following true facts to light in public interest.
>
> Broadly speaking, the Meenas in Jaipur belong to two classes: 'Zamindari' or cultivators and 'Chowkidari' or watchkeepers. The former, who are a few *lakhs* in number and constitute the greater majority, are engaged of old in peaceful agricultural pursuits. The latter are hereditary descendants of those Meenas who were entrusted with watch and ward work with a view to preventing them from following the open road and to get habitual miscreants arrested. These Meenas are still styled as 'Chowkidars'.
>
> It would be highly wrong to assume that all the Meenas are subject to operations of the Criminal Tribes Act. Only a section of the Meena Chowkidars is subject to this. The total number of such registered Meena Chowkidars is about 14,000 males only: Of them there are only below 5,000 now under surveillance. This number is also progressively diminishing. The restrictions in this regard could be summarized as under:
>
> (a) only such Meenas who have been convicted for a non-bailable offence or an offence under the Criminal Tribes Act are restricted in their movements and are under surveillance;
>
> (b) even under the above provision such members who have not been convicted again during the last ten years have been exempted from surveillance;
>
> (c) scetion 28 of The Criminal Tribes Act bans a member of the Criminal Tribe as defined under the Act, from possessing any means of conveyance or arms except with permission in writing from the Inspector-General of Police. It may be pointed out here that under the word Arms only swords are implied to be banned. Possession of Fire Arms is covered under the usual provisions of the Arms Act. There are no restrictions on Lathis as alleged.
>
> The allegation that whenever a theft occurs, Meenas are taken for granted as accused and are subjected to various hardships is again without any foundation whatsoever. It is of course true that in a very high percentage of cases against property, the Meena Chowkidars are suspected and traced as accused. The question of confiscation of property arises only when a case is in a court of law and decision of the court requires such action. No instance of Meena Chowkidars being forcibly employed without adequate remuneration by the rich Marwadies has been brought to notice.
>
> As regards the incident of a police clash on the occasion of the last Mahavir Fair, the case is before a court of law. It may also be mentioned in this connection that the question of replacing the existing Criminal Tribes Act by another Act which may be applicable only to individual habitual offenders is under active consideration of the Rajasthan Government. The Government is also considering measures to promote the material and moral welfare of this backward class and to reform their outlook.

With regard to the summary of restrictions against Meena Chowkidars given in the above letter, as regards (a), I do not know what are the restrictions under the Criminal Tribes Act. But if an act, if done by a non-Meena, is not an offence, it should not be an offence merely because it is done by a member of Meena Chowkidars; and as regards (c), restrictions on possession of means of conveyance not applicable to ordinary citizens do not seem to be at all fair.

In short, the rights of none who has not committed an offence himself should be curtailed outside the ordinary laws. I hope the Rajasthan Government will remove these disabilities at an early date.

Wardha, 29-10-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

INDIA AT THE CHARIOT WHEEL OF BRITAIN

The reason for Britain devaluing its currency is to capture markets which are at the moment under the Americans. This step is calculated to make the American goods more expensive as compared with British manufactures. For instance, an American car worth $ 1000, if sold formerly for £ 250, will now be priced at £ 375. This is equivalent to a protective duty of about 50 per cent on American goods. The effect of this will be to drive out American goods and substitute them by British-made articles. Upto now the Americans have been striving hard to capture foreign markets. It is not conceivable that they will now acquiesce in a programme that will cut at their hard-built-up trade. It is too early yet to foretell what the American counter-move will be but it is obvious that a competitive price-cutting war has already started.

From the moral side, we know that covetousness leads to violence. As this step is based on avarice, it is bound to have an adverse effect on the Anglo-American cordiality which had hitherto prevailed. Whatever the economic effects of the devaluation of the Sterling in relation to the Dollar may be, the political repercussions are likely to give room for cause for anxiety. It may affect the alignment of powers at the time of the next conflict. From this point of view, it would seem as though the devaluation of the rupee means that India would sign on with Britain, while Pakistan will hang on to America when world war III descends on us.

"Freedom of India" has been shown up to be economically a farce as she is being toed behind the British without having a word to say in the matter.

The devaluation of the currency of a country in relation to that of another will tend to increase its export trade, while its imports will cost more. In the case of Great Britain, which is a manufacturing country, the immediate effect will be beneficial until such time as will be required for the other countries to launch their counter-moves.

As far as India is concerned, its exports being largely raw materials, the effect will be disadvantageous as we shall not be able to expand such exports to meet any enhanced demand while our imports will cost comparatively more. The former will benefit the commercial interests, while the latter will affect the consumers.

This incident underlines the dangerous position that India holds in world politics because of her commitments to the Commonwealth.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

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LEST WE FORGET
XIX

Khadi in Various Aspects

(y)

Foreign cloth to India is like foreign matter to the body. The destruction of the former is as necessary for the health of India as of the latter for the health of the body (*Economics of Khadi*, p. 48).

(z)

The Poor Man's Way

Millions are too poor to buy enough Khadi to replace the discarded cloth........Let them be satisfied with a mere loincloth..........Let there be no prudery about dress. India has never insisted on full covering of the body for the males as a test of culture.

......In order......to set the example, I propose to discard......my *topi* and vest, and to content myself with only a loincloth and a *chaddar* whenever found necessary for the protection of the body (*Ibid*, p. 50, *Young India*, 29 Sept. 1921).

I

Death and Immortality

(h)

The few days' separation is a preparation for the longer that death brings. In fact the separation is only superficial. Death brings us nearer. Is not the body a bar — if it is also an introduction? (*Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Navajivan, p. 12).

(i)

The loved one lives more truly for the dissolution of the body and renders the love also truer because unselfish and also because it is transferred to all that lives (*Ibid*, p. 159).

(k)

We must learn the art of never grieving over death, no matter when and to whom it comes. I suppose that we shall do when we have really learnt to be utterly indifferent to our own, and the indifference will come when we are every moment conscious of having done the task to which we are called. But how shall we know the task? By knowing God's will. How shall we know the will? By proper and right living. Indeed prayer should mean right living. There is a *bhajan*......whose refrain is 'Prayer has been never known to have failed anybody.' Prayer means being one with God (*Ibid*, p. 301).

(l)

We really live through and in our work. We perish through our perishable bodies, if instead of using them as temporary instruments, we identify ourselves with them (*Ibid*, p. 41).

(m)

You come in daily touch with me by doing my work as if it was your own (*Ibid*, p. 47).

(n)

Life is a preparation for death. And somehow or other we quail to think of that inevitable and grand event. It is grand even regarded as

a preparation for a better life than the past, as it should be for every one who tries to live in the fear of God (*Ibid,* p. 195).

(o)

Nothing but a fixed faith that death for the good is a translation to a better state, and for the evil a beneficent escape can reconcile us to the mystery of death (*Ibid,* p. 323).

GANDHIGRAM — A RAY OF HOPE

Gandhigram is one of the few cases in the desert of depression — a desert which our people have created without any cause and without any purpose. We cannot rise as a nation, we cannot be happy and contented as a people, until we solve the multi-sided problem of the villages. Gandhiji taught the nation by setting the example himself that the best men in the land must take up the problem of the villages, by planting themselves in the village atmosphere. All the dangers of communalism, communism, violence and anarchy can be removed only through the lever of village uplift.

But village work has no glamour about it. It does not lead to immediate political advancement. Neither the Congress nor the Swaraj Government have been able to place village work in the forefront of their policy. It was only Gandhiji who insisted that the work of *Nai Talim* should be spread in the villages and the activities of the Kasturba Memorial Fund should be carried on for the benefit of the women and children of the villages. Towards the close of his days, Gandhiji concentrated his attention on *Samagra-Gram-Seva,* i. e. all-round service of the villages.

I was only too glad to accept the invitation of my friend, Shri G. Ramachandran, to visit Gandhigram on the day of its second anniversary, namely, October 7th. I knew that his wife, Dr. Soundaram, was devoting all her energies for the development of Gandhigram; but I had no idea of the nature or extent of the work that was being done there.

"You are no doctor but a wizard!" I said to Dr. Soundaram, when she showed me round a number of villages which were being served by Gandhigram under her inspiration and guidance. Gandhigram, the parent body is located in a healthy and poetic place between mountains on the East and West. It is between Dindigul and Madura, near the wayside railway station of Ambathurai.

Basic Education, Kasturba work and *Samagra-Gram-Seva* are all combined in this centre. The maternity home, *khadi* work, agriculture, voluntary segregation of lepers, multi-purpose co-operative societies — are some of the main activities carried on here. What attracted me most was that all the workers were highly trained and are themselves training others with faith and thoroughness which is all their own, and which is evident in the results achieved during the short span of two years. They have been able to collect about a couple of *lakhs* of rupees from their own district alone. The Madras Government also has recognized the utility of this centre by seeking to work out its schemes of village uplift through this centre and by acquiring land for its development. What is of utmost importance is that Gandhigram has been able to overcome the apathy of the masses and create in them enthusiasm and hope instead.

Mr. Keithahn, the well-known and devoted American friend of India, has made Gandhigram his home. I found him spending all his thought and energy in the sevice of the institution. It is no small thing that Gandhigram has been able to capture this servant of humanity who can reduce himself to zero in the service of the poor, the neglected and the suppressed.

I see a great future before this young institution of Gandhigram and would wish prospective village workers to visit this institution and see for themselves what single-minded devotion can achieve even in an atmosphere of all-round depression. Gandhigram is pre-eminently a women's institution but pledged to serve men, women and children all alike.

KAKA KALELKAR

Harijan Disabilities in South Kanara

Though the Civil Disabilities Removal Act has been passed and the 30th of every month is observed as 'Harijan Day' in the Madras Presidency, cases of discrimination against Harijans still occur in South Kanara. For instance, arrangements have been made to distribute mid-day meals in Harijan Welfare Schools run by Government. According to Government orders, no discrimination should be made on account of caste or creed in these schools, but the teachers do not follow these instructions strictly. In one school, separate arrangements have been made for Thiyya (a higher caste) pupils in a private house. In another school, the Harijan cook has been replaced by a caste-Hindu. Complaints of such discrimination made to the authorities have been unattended. It is suspected that some of the Harijan Welfare Officers, being Christians, are interested in perpetuating such discriminations in order to create a favourable ground for conversion activities of their missionary co-religionists.

In tea-shops also Harijans are meted out the same discrimination. Separate seats and cups have been provided for them. If untouchability in any shape or form is to be removed, the Act should be enforced more strictly and erring officials should be dealt with promptly and severely. The passing of Acts and the observance of the Harijan Day lose all significance along side with the existence of such discriminations. I hope the Government would take necessary action in the matter.

Payyanur SWAMI ANANDATIRTH

[*Note*: I think that what is more necessary than strict "official action" is to work among the caste-Hindus and make an appeal to *their* head and heart. —K. G. M.]

THE ECONOMY OF FREEDOM

Any nation that wishes to be independent has to have an economy based on self-sufficiency in food, clothing and shelter and has to build up a social order that will be self-contained. No independence purely of a political type can ever be lasting, however much of armaments we might build up to back up such independence. We have seen the futility of armaments in the history of Japan, Germany, France and other European countries. Even those countries which were armed to the teeath had had to succumb to exigencies, over which they could exercise no control. Hence it is that economic and social freedom should be the basis for real independence.

Our country is primarily an agricultural country. Here we have to build up an economy that will be sound from the point of view of wealth-production to meet the everyday needs of the people. Such a programme will involve a careful planning of both, our agricultural economy as well as our rural industries, so that people can have enough to eat and sustain themsleves, to clothe themselves against the weather and provide shelter over their heads. The growth of food materials themselves should be so planned as to provide each individual with a balanced diet. Similarly, raw materials for clothing, such as cotton and wool, will have to be planned to meet the needs of the bulk of our population. Hence every village will have to have its lands allocated so as to produce the raw materials needed to fulfil its primary needs. A survey should be taken of the types of lands available and they should be so distributed as to provide it with the needed raw materials.

This planning would involve control of production at the village level. This can be ensured by empowering or organizing village *panchayats* giving them power either to license the various lands for growing crops according to their plan or to keep the lands under communal ownership and let them out to those who will utilize them according to the plans laid down by the local authorities.

Then, once the products are made available, multi-purpose co-operative societies should be organized to make exchange possible between the villagers themselves. The co-operative societies will now step in to have the articles processed so as to produce consumer goods. If there is any surplus in one village, such surplus can be exchanged for other articles not available in the locality or region. This organization will thus provide the primary needs of the people, will encourage local industries and will give employment to people of the village in the production and distribution as well as in the processing of the various raw materials.

To help the cultivators to increase their production to the optimum limit, it is necessary to afford them various facilities. The land itself has to have sufficient manure and irrigation facilities. These can be provided by a drive for making compost out of waste and helping the villagers to undertake anti-erosion work and irrigation projects of their own with the help of such technical skill as the Government may give. The processes suggested should be well under the financial capacity of the villagers. The moment schemes are evolved which call for more elaborate technical skill, the planning and execution of the village economy will pass off into the hands outside the village. This will be derogatory to the development of the villages and very often even to their interests.

The growth of money exchange has now brought it to a level where it has become an end in itself. This also has taken away the control of rural economy from the rural population and placed it in the hands of urban interests. If we wish to ensure that the rural economy is to be run by the villages, as far as practicable we should encourage exchange of goods for goods, that is, a mild form of barter combined with a certain amount of money economy. This alone would keep the production of villages for their benefit and will prevent exploitation of the weak by the strong.

Politically also, the villagers will get their training in having certain of the public utilities such as making village roads, looking after anti-erosion schemes, maintenance of tanks, wells and other means of water-supply transferred to them. This will, when organized through adult franchise, build up a practical cabinet based on the co-operation of the villages and their countrymen. In time, such organizations will develop into a training ground for greater responsibilities which will carry some of them up into *taluka* level and district level and perhaps later into provincial spheres and ultimately to the Central Government also. In this way, the rural economy will develop a leadership which will make itself felt in the highest counsels of the nation.

In our country, which is largely an agricultural country, unless we have our political system based on the personnel trained in villages, the outlook of the national policy will not support the interests of the masses of the people.

For the development of our rural economy, we must keep in mind the resources available to the villages and base it on an organization well within their control. There is a good deal of interest shown today in rural development by vested interests, which have advocated methods of development which will not fall within the conditions we have laid down. For instance, the method of tractor cultivation will be one which would call for use of crude oil or other such fuel which will not be available in our villages nor can India even produce these. Therefore any large dependence on such aids will be fatal to the interests of agriculture. If we are at any time unable to get either this machinery

or fuel, it means that our programme of cultivation will fail and bring starvation in its wake.

Similarly, methods of fertilization will have to be suited to the needs of the people. Our country is an old over-developed land and therefore artificial fertilizers, if they are to be used, will require constant chemical analysis of the soil. We are unable at the present time to provide the trained personnel for this work. That being so, it will not be possible to introduce freely artificial fertilizers to any great extent. It would mean that we have to adopt composting as the basis of refertilizing the soil. Besides, the dependence on the monsoon for our water-supply makes fertilization a gamble because we cannot control the quantity of water that is needed. Hence it is that our rural economy should be kept within the possibilities within the reach of the villagers.

There are various other technical departments in which aids would be necessary from governmental organization, such as improvement in seeds, dealing with pests and the distribution of the products. For this the proper help should come from well-directed research from the Agricultural Department. A great deal of our energy today is being spent in providing aids to production for exchange, such as the raw materials for industries, rather than production for consumption, such as food-grains, etc. Hence it is necessary for us to divert the activity of our agricultural department on the research level towards food production. Even where the research has been carried out, it has been found that the available knowledge has not reached the cultivator. Hence the organization for dissemination of knowledge that is available should be such as to make the agricultural knowledge reach out to the individual farmer.

Unless we plan our agricultural economy on this basis, it will be difficult for us to meet the food shortage. Similarly, if we do not pay attention to our other needs also on the same basis, it would be difficult for rural economy to discharge its responsibilities to the country. The development of our economy on this basis is a fundamental proposition before we can be assured of a lasting independence. Our independence has come and to retain that independence, it is necessary for us to give a priority for rural development on these lines.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

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SCAVENGING IN CITIES

Charkha Jayanti was observed at Wardha on the 2nd October by organizing scavenging work in the town. Over a hundred workers (not a few among them were ladies) took part in the programme. There were also some townspeople among them, but the majority belonged to the various constructive organizations in and around Wardha. To many of us scavenging in a city was a new experience ; our programme was perhaps a novelty to Wardha itself.

Early in the morning of the 2nd October, all the workers assembled at an appointed place and divided themselves into as many groups as the number of wards in the town and, led by the municipal scavenger of each ward, started cleaning the latrines. While the scavengers showed the latrines, cleaning was done by the volunteers and the night-soil was carried to a central place, from where it was transported in a cart. Of course, in fairness to the scavengers, it must be said that the standard of our performance was not all that could be desired, and in some very difficult situations they had to assist the workers.

We had to negotiate narrow and difficult lanes to reach the latrines, whose conditions were beyond description or imagination. Only those who actually performed the duty, could have an idea of it. We had to do this cleaning only for a day, and we felt bitter at the lack of one facility or another ; but when the scavengers, who have to do it daily, give vent to any grievances, we are not quite sympathetic towards them. I am sure that if citizens and city-fathers of such towns do this work even occasionally, they would not treat their conservancy staff in the way they do at present.

The work was a good experience for all of us. It was really a matter for surprise that such a large number of workers volunteered and went through the programme without any retreating, which showed a great mental preparation. The whole of Wardha watched our work in bewilderment.

Such programmes have, of course, their propaganda value to demonstrate that no work is too mean and scavenging is as much a necessary service as any other, which should be performed by every one, high or low. But at the same time we should not forget the real significance of such demonstrations. By doing scavenging ourselves, our object was not to demonstrate that it was a noble work and the scavengers should not consider it mean. That was not Gandhiji's idea, in whose memory we carried out the programme. Our object is to remove the social stigma attached to such work and to those who perform it,— namely, untouchability. To achieve this, more has to be done than merely organizing such programmes some times in a year. They should be further reinforced with greater and equal association with the scavengers in their entire life. For instance, in several

bungalows and institutions, there are scavengers to look after conservancy work and they live mostly in the same compound. The people residing in the area may not observe much of untouchability, but still their attitude towards them is one of disinterestedness. Socially their status is not quite happy, because they live segregated in a corner of big compounds, even though they might enjoy complete freedom of movement in the area. Their huts are dilapidated and dirty and, therefore, their living is not quite clean or healthy. For this reason or on account of their own self-abnegation, as it usualy happens in the case of these backward people, they do not enjoy the status of even domestic servants in the locality. This appears to me to be the real problem facing the workers in the cause of removal of untouchability. If we have really removed untouchbility from our hearts, we should not behave towards scavengers in the manner described above. They should be provided with decent houses and other amenities of life, so that they can lead clean and healthy lives ; their social status, even though they do scavenging work, should not be in any way less than that of the poorest of the other 'touchables' in the locality. If the scavenger families living in our surroundings could be thus raised from this social evil, I think it would be a contribution and achievement of great moral value in the cause of Harijans. Ultimately, it might pave the way for reforms in town-scavenging. At present the conditions of work in town-scavenging are so sub-human that it is surprising that human beings prepared to do it from day to day are to be found.

T. R. RAJAGOPALAN

COMBATING LEPROSY

I

Ex-Colony Care and Treatment

It is usual to think in terms of colonies whenever a plan for taking steps to tackle the problem of leprosy is discussed. Christian missionaries have been the first servants of these patients. They were inspired by the example and precept of Jesus Christ. These pioneers conceived the idea of colonies and all the efforts thereafter naturally ran through that channel. In spite of colonies, however, the disease is alarmingly spreading. Isolation in colonies is no doubt indispensable at a certain stage. But the necessity for them would be much reduced if effective measures are undertaken to stop the spread of the disease in the early stages. No effort regarding these essential measures seems to have been yet put forward in any country where it is highly prevalent.

The great good that has come out of the colonies is that research and scientific study of the various aspects of this disease have followed this service in some of the colonies and certain results, medically and sociologically important, have been reached. The results may be summarized as follows :

(i) The disease is caused by a particular type of bacilli ;

(ii) There are certain indications in early stages, giving notice of their presence. 75 per cent of these cases are non-infectious and can be checked and cured if necessary treatment is promptly taken in the early stages ;

(iii) Ordinarily, colonies take charge of patients whose symptoms have become marked or after some deformities have set in. But before this stage arrives, the bacilli are active and the patient at that stage is likely to be highly infective ;

(iv) The human body is found to show remarkable resistance to these bacilli ; it is due to this that the disease has not been able to spread itself in proportion to its age-long existence ;

(v) After disfigurement or deformities, some patients seem to have become free from this disease. These are called "burnt out" cases. It seems that the deformities and disfigurements are a result of the superior capacity of the human body to banish this disease, even at the cost of some limbs, etc.

All these go to make it clear that, if at all this disease has to be banished from any country, the first and foremost place has to be given to the measures to be adopted in the early stages, that is to say, before the colony stage is reached and the patients have already started the mischief of spreading infection.

These measures can be successful if the Himalayan difficulties of heart and head in the way are removed. The first and foremost is our inhuman attitude towards these helpless and unfortunate brother-victims. "Ignorance," said Vivekananda, "is the cause of fear." This ignorance is responsible for the panicky funk that we take as soon as we see or learn about this disease. Almost all are victims of this unwelcome emotion. But foremost amongst them seem to be the so-called intelligentsia including doctors and medical authorities in power. When this is the case even with this class of persons, the attitude of the masses is not to be wondered at. But through ignorance of another type, though they hate the diseased, they neglect even the bare precautions against the disease itself, and allow it to spread. Both these attitudes are two extremes of ignorance and are equally undesirable.

The attitude of aversion is obviously inhuman and morally unjustifiable. It is no fault of the victims that they have fallen a helpless prey to the onslaught of these bacilli. Aversion of the victim of an evil instead of the evil itself has, as usual, proved to be a punishment to society itself. It harasses the victims, but allows the disease to spread. And, therefore, even on consideration of self-interest, it is to our advantage to change this attitude, if we want to check the spread of and ultimately eradicate this disease.

The attitude of disgust shown towards the patient is responsible for the reaction in the latter and his family to screen and hide this disease as far as possible. This is possible only at the stage when disfigurement or other marked symptoms have not set in. But long before this stage comes, the mischief of spreading the

infection is completed. So, obviously, it is necessary first to inculcate an attitude, which will enable the patient and his family also to take the right attitude, which will result in the patient's willing and sincere desire to behave so as not to be a source of danger to others. To achieve this result, these cases should be treated as special cases calling for sympathetic attention of the family and society. All should make sympathetic, anxious and helpful enquiries about them. The best room in the house should be allotted to them. They should be provided with decent and adequate utensils, clothes and food. If there is no room in the house of the patient, a special room, simple but attractive, should be found out or constructed in the locality. One and all in society should co-operate to make necessary provision, as above, for these unfortunate victims. Then alone there will be no incentive left to hide this disease and the spread can thus be immediately checked.

The panicky condition above referred to is a great impendiment in the way of applying our head to face this disease. It is necessary, therefore, that we must be able to be free from this condition and apply our heads to the facts before us. As soon as we do so, the following facts will embolden us to take the right, simple and easy steps necessary to safeguard all from the spread of this disease.

Thousands of missionaries have been serving these patients for centuries in all climes and countries. It is said that only a negligible few, about four or so, have been infected and only one of them is a female. As against this, the number of those who are not in such service and still get infection may well be regarded as innumerable. What then is the nature of this infection? All those doctors who are working in this line for years are unanimously of opinion that the contagiousness of this disease is not like that of itches, ringworm, small-pox, etc.; it is infectious but not so mush and rapid as T. B., plague, cholera, etc.; the infection is likely only after close, continuous and prolonged physical contact; children are highly susceptible to it; abrasions in the skin enabling the bacilli to enter directly in the skin render this infection more easy; and adults after thirty acquire a sort of immunity.

The above facts should convince us that panic has no place in it and safety can be ensured by taking the following simple and easy precautions:

Children should not be allowed to come in contact with the infectious patients; the sleeping room, clothes and utensils of the infectious patients should be separate; the persons serving should avoid close, continuous physical contact and should have no abrasions on any part of the body; when the public and the patient have the right attitude, i. e. when the former is sympathetic and the latter behaves so as not to be a source of infection to others, the next step, which it will be possible successfully to take, is the construction of special, simple huts or rooms in the locality to house the patient for the night. These rooms will be enough for local segregation and can be constructed in the village itself.

All the above goes to show that before thinking of colonies, it is necessary to carry on propaganda on an intensive scale to bring home to almost every individual to inculcate the right attitude and to impart the knowledge of the precautionary measures safe-guarding society against infection. This leads us to the necessity of knwoing how to detect this disease in the initial stages. Ordinary laymen should be in a position to be able to ascertain from certain indications to act promptly in the right direction. The suspicious indications are (1) discoloration, patches or spots on any part of the body, either faint, red or of a colour which is uncommon and (2) loss of sensation in any part of the body. As soon as these or similar indications are noticed, the patient should be taken to a doctor who has equipment for testing leprosy bacilli and then the necessary simple precautions should be respectfully taken. The patient should have the best rooms, clothes and utensils in the house.

V. V. DASTANE

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